

## **From Inquiry to Improvement (I2I): Catalytic Assistance to Significantly Increase Postsecondary Student Success**

### **Learning from a Decade of Community College Reform and Research**

To their great credit, community colleges have embraced the goal of improving student success and completion. Research and experience tell us that deep and lasting improvement hinges on the ability of colleges to forego fragmented and piecemeal reform and fundamentally rethink and redesign their policies, programs and services. Yet unprecedented resource constraints, increased competition and “initiative fatigue” makes navigating this landscape a daunting prospect. I2I brings a team of seasoned, committed professionals to help colleges and state systems make the lasting changes needed to bring about substantial improvements in student success.

### **I2I’s Design Principles**

The I2I team bases its work on evidence-based principles and practices that guide the design of academic programs and student supports and foster an innovative and collaborative culture. Our design principles are:

#### **Design academic programs to create clear, guided pathways for students**

Colleges can empower students by providing well-structured and educationally coherent academic programs and clearly-defined learning outcomes aligned with the requirements for success in further education and employment.

#### **Develop advising processes and support systems to monitor student progress and provide meaningful feedback to students and educators**

Advising and other essential supports can be built into academic programs at key “touch points” along the student pathway, and colleges can use information they already have to customize feedback to students to catalyze their progress.

#### **Accelerate student entry into college-level programs and contextualize instruction**

Colleges can “mainstream” academically unprepared students into college-level gateway courses and integrate added supports in the curriculum. Rather than require a gauntlet of non-transferable remedial courses, colleges can customize and contextualize basic academic and college success “soft skills” into introductory college coursework.

#### **Create collaborative communities of practice to improve instruction and supports**

Colleges can create vibrant communities of practice to support faculty and student services professionals in assessing student learning and persistence and making evidence-informed decisions that strengthen curricula, instruction and student services.

### **Build functional and durable bridges to college**

Colleges can partner with high-schools, adult basic education programs, and workforce development agencies to build bridges to college-level programs of study and thus better prepare and guide students to pursue a path toward academic and professional success.

### **To help you increase student success, I2I can help you:**

#### **Support the successful implementation of systemic reforms**

Most failures of innovation are actually failures of implementation. The I2I team brings decades of experience helping colleges approach planning and implementation of systemic reforms in ways that maximize success.

#### **Amplify student voice**

Unfortunately, most students experience college as a maze, not a path. Gaining a deeper understanding of the student experience of enrollment, registration, choosing a program of study and selecting courses is an important reality check and a great guide to practice for institutional change-agents dedicated to student success.

#### **Identify meaningful performance metrics and data for improvement**

I2I can help colleges sort through the many frameworks in the field and create metrics that will powerfully inform efforts to improve student success and college performance.

#### **Build a healthy culture of inquiry that leads to improvement**

Colleges have a treasure trove of data that could help them improve their practices and catalyze student progression toward their goals. The I2I team can help guide colleges through an inquiry process that enables them to extract insight from information, translate data and analysis into actionable next steps and evaluate reforms in ways that will guide further improvements.

**Strengthen the capacity of leaders and influencers at many levels to effectively engage internal and external stakeholders as constructive partners in change** Sustainable, meaningful gains in student success require not only changing well-established college practices, but confronting cultural norms and practices specific to institutions and the community college field more generally. This is why effectively engaging critical stakeholders in the change process is essential to its success.

### **How We Work**

We use workshops, retreats, trainings, keynote sessions, facilitated team meetings, focus groups, stakeholder dialogues and virtual support with campus and system leaders to help catalyze processes of continuous improvement. While we will customize our approach for each situation, we have provided a set of project types for your consideration.

#### **Jump Start**

- One 1-day workshop or 2-day retreat that brings in I2I team members to work intensively with your core team to assess the status of your student success efforts, and to determine what innovation at scale means and entails in your context.

### **Jump Start + (w/Virtual Ongoing Support)**

- One 1-day workshop or 2-day retreat that brings in I2I team members to work intensively with your college community or core team to assess the status of your student success efforts, and to determine what innovation at scale means and entails in your context.
- Two days of subsequent ongoing support for college leadership team through webinars, conference calls, Skype meetings, and review of data, strategies, and plans

### **Jump Start & Staying Connected**

- One 1-day workshop or 2-day retreat that brings in I2I team members to work intensively with your college community or core team to assess the status of your student success efforts, and to determine what innovation at scale means and entails in your context.
- One or two 1-2 day meetings with college steering team, with customized additional support from experienced partners from other colleges
- 4 days of ongoing support via webinars, conference calls, Skype meetings, and review of data, strategies, and plans
- Executive report recommending strategies for planning and implementing the improvement process, engaging faculty staff, measuring results and cost-benefit, and institutionalizing improvements. recommendations for

### **A Sustained Engagement**

- One 1-day workshop or 2-day retreat that brings in I2I team members to work intensively with your college community or core team to assess the status of your student success efforts, and to determine what innovation at scale means and entails in your context.
- Three or four on-site customized technical assistance / professional support days, designed to work with smaller working groups of college professionals
- 6 days of ongoing support via webinars, conference calls, Skype meetings, and review of data, strategies, and plans. Topics potentially include producing detailed reports recommending strategies for planning and implementing the improvement process, engaging faculty staff, measuring results and cost-benefit, and institutionalizing improvements.

### **The Core Team**

Led by Dr. Rob Johnstone, Founder & President of the National Center for Inquiry & Improvement, the combined talents and capacities of the I2I team offers decades of cutting edge research, on-the-ground experience, world-class facilitations skills, and deep understanding of colleges and state systems. We've worked in more than half of the states on community college reform efforts, ranging from assistance to individual colleges and systems to participation in national initiatives such as Achieving the Dream, Completion by Design, Lumina Foundation's Goal 2025, and the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.

### **Moving Forward**

We would welcome the opportunity to speak with you further about how we might help your college or system accelerate progress on your student success goals. Feel free to contact either Rob Johnstone at [rob@inquiry2improvement.com](mailto:rob@inquiry2improvement.com) for more information or to schedule a conversation.